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Gender statistics

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report was prepared at the request of the Statistical Commission at its forty-second session (see E/2011/24, chap. I.A). As requested by the Commission, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and the Statistics Division conducted a series of activities to implement the tasks specified in paragraphs 46 and 50 of the programme review of gender statistics (E/CN.3/2011/3). The report gives a summary of the activities undertaken so far by the Division and the Inter-agency and Expert Group and presents the workplan and strategies to strengthen the global gender statistics programme. The Commission is invited to comment on progress made by the Inter-agency and Expert Group and the Statistics Division and their future direction of work.

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I. Introduction

1. At its forty-second session, the Statistical Commission requested the Statistics Division to assume a leadership role in charting the path for the development of gender statistics globally and the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics to expand the scope of its work to include: (a) reviewing gender statistics with the aim of establishing a minimum set of gender indicators; (b) guiding the development of manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics; and (c) serving as the coordination mechanism for the global programme on gender statistics.

2. The Commission also agreed to the tasks proposed in the programme review of gender statistics, including: (a) undertaking a comprehensive review of gender statistics programmes in countries; (b) establishing a minimum set of gender indicators for international compilation and dissemination; (c) continuing to hold annual meetings of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics; (d) convening biannually the Global Forum on Gender Statistics; and (e) offering technical support and advance methodological work for the development of gender statistics programmes in countries.

3. The present report provides a summary of the steps undertaken by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and the Statistics Division to fulfil the tasks specified above, including defining the strategies and plans for future work by all partners involved in the development of gender statistics.

II. Review of gender statistics programmes in countries

4. The programme review of gender statistics highlighted the need to identify best practices in setting up institutional arrangements for the production and use of gender statistics, based on a comprehensive review of national gender programmes. It included a request that the review be undertaken by the regional commissions and compiled into a global synthesis by the Statistics Division.

5. A questionnaire on a global review of gender statistics was developed by the Statistics Division in consultation with the regional commissions and presented and was discussed at the meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics in October 2011. A task team was established within the Inter-agency and Expert Group to finalize the questionnaire, which will be issued in the six official languages of the United Nations and used by the regional commissions to survey national statistical systems in their respective regions.

6. The main objective of the survey is to obtain information on how gender perspectives are mainstreamed into national statistical systems, including traditional areas of statistical production and new emerging areas, such as gender-based violence. The review is intended to provide the necessary elements to assess the most effective ways to integrate gender into the production and use of statistics, on the basis of which the best practices to be used by countries will be compiled.

7. The final version of the questionnaire is scheduled to be provided to the regional commissions by the end of November 2011. The survey will be carried out between December 2011 and February 2012, and the preliminary regional results will be presented in April 2012 at the Global Forum on Gender Statistics.

III. Establishment of a minimum set of gender indicators

8. Following the recommendations by the Statistical Commission, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics tasked its Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Database with the identifying the indicators to be included in the minimum set of gender indicators. A subgroup of technical experts from national statistical systems and international agencies developed the list of indicators, based on the main criterion that the indicators selected should address key policy concerns as identified in the Beijing Platform for Action and other more recent international commitments.

9. The minimum set of indicators is meant to provide a basis from which to promote the production and compilation of gender statistics at the national level. The list includes indicators addressing the key issues in gender equality and women's empowerment that are common across countries and regions and is intended as a basic set, with indicators specific to regional and national contexts to be added by regional and national entities. For the purpose of gender analysis at the national level, and as a tool for national policy development and monitoring, the group agreed that more data would be needed, including cross-tabulations involving such variables as age group, rural/urban residence, race or ethnicity, and disability status.

10. The choice of indicators for the minimum set was guided by three criteria, including that an indicator should:

(a) Address relevant issues related to gender equality and/or women's empowerment;

(b) Be conceptually clear, easy to interpret and have an agreed international definition;

(c) Have been regularly produced by countries, with sufficient coverage to allow regional or national comparisons and tracking of progress over time.

In addition, the choice of indicators took into account existing lists of indicators agreed at the international level.

11. Based on the three criteria, the proposed indicators were categorized into three tiers as follows:

- Tier 1, including indicators that meet all three criteria
- Tier 2, including indicators that meet criteria (a) and (b), above
- Tier 3, includes indicators that meet criterion (a)

12. The Statistics Division has compiled detailed information on the definitions, sources and data availability for the selected indicators in order to determine their placement into the three tiers. Indicators in tier 3 are those that address key gender or women's empowerment issues, but for which the metadata and data collection mechanisms have yet to be fully developed. The Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics agreed to undertake further methodological work on those indicators so that clear data collection concepts and definitions can be established.

13. The list was reviewed and discussed at the meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics held in October 2011. The main recommendations

of the meeting were that: (a) operational definitions and indications of possible sources should be specified for each indicator in the list; (b) efforts should be made to assist countries to build national capacity to produce the minimum set of indicators; and (c) ongoing work on the development of international lists of indicators should be taken into account. In order to address point (b), the group agreed that the need to ensure the availability of resources and technical assistance to enable countries to produce the indicators should be explicitly included in the text of the Busan action plan for statistics, to be presented at the fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, to be held in Busan, Republic of Korea.

14. Given that the list is also meant to be the basis for international data compilation, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics discussed steps to establish a mechanism for the international agencies to regularly provide data and metadata to the Statistics Division, for data repository. The agreed list of indicators, incorporating comments and input from members of the Inter-agency and Expert Group, is presented in the annex to the present report.

IV. Initiative on harmonizing gender indicators

15. In an effort to accelerate progress in the production and use of gender indicators, an initiative was launched in April 2011 by the United States of America at the ministerial session on gender and development of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Through the gender data harmonization initiative, a list was proposed of internationally comparable gender indicators on education, employment and entrepreneurship so as to facilitate learning and assist national Governments in producing the necessary data to inform policies and programmes.

16. The Inter-agency and Expert Group considered the initiative and discussed ways to reconcile the list of indicators proposed under the initiative with the minimum set of gender indicators developed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group. The group reached a consensus and the minimum set of gender indicators incorporates all the indicators proposed under the initiative.

V. Development of manuals and guidelines

A. Gender statistics manual

17. A key concern in developing gender statistics has been the need for reference materials, training manuals and handbooks to be used by national statisticians. In 2009, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics recommended that the publication *Engendering Statistics*, produced by Statistics Sweden in 1996, be revised and updated to produce a new manual with the primary objective of encouraging gender mainstreaming in the production of all official statistics.

18. Following the recommendation of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics, the Statistics Division has engaged in the preparation of the new manual, addressing also the request made by the Statistical Commission at its forty-second session for the development of manuals and methodological guidelines for the production and use of gender statistics. Two chapters of the manual, on

identifying data gaps in gender issues and gender statistics, and on integrating a gender perspective into data collection, were presented and discussed at the fifth meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group, held in New York from 4 to 6 October 2011. The remaining two chapters will be finalized by the end of 2011. The draft will then be reviewed and discussed at the next meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group, to be held in April 2012.

19. The manual will help statisticians to: (a) identify gaps in gender statistics and develop a coherent and comprehensive plan for the production of gender statistics; (b) ensure that survey instruments and censuses take into account gender issues and avoid gender-biases in measurement; (c) improve data analysis and data presentation and deliver gender statistics in a format that is easy to use by policymakers and planners.

20. The Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics provided comments and input on the structure and content of the manual. Experts from agencies and national statistical systems who are also members of the group will continue to provide input throughout the preparation of the manual in their respective areas of expertise. The group also agreed that a new section of the manual or a separate volume should be prepared containing a guide for compiling the agreed indicators to be used for the minimum set of gender indicators. The necessary resources and mechanisms for its production will need to be identified.

B. Guidelines for producing statistics on violence against women

21. The draft guidelines for producing statistics on violence against women were reviewed and discussed at a consultative meeting held on the premises of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) in Beirut from 8 to 11 November 2011. The guidelines provide a comprehensive methodological guidance on the selection of topics in surveys, sources of data, relevant statistical classifications, outputs, wording of questions and all other relevant issues related to conducting statistical surveys to measure violence against women. The meeting provided an opportunity to review the text in detail and for experts to provide important input for the improvement and completion of the text.

VI. Coordination of the Global Gender Statistics Programme

22. When the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics was first convened in December 2006, experts noted that, although many activities had been implemented in response to the growing demand for gender statistics, they were fragmented and had limited impact. As a result, gender statistics had not yet been institutionalized as part of the national and international statistical systems. In order to advance gender statistics at the global, regional and national levels, the Inter-agency and Expert Group recommended at that meeting the creation of a Global Gender Statistics Programme. Since its establishment, the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics has helped to foster the development of gender statistics in countries and globally, by promoting training activities, data compilation and the dissemination and exchange of experiences and best practices and by improving international coordination and a dialogue with countries in all activities related to gender statistics.

A. Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics

23. At its forty-second session, the Statistical Commission recognized the strategic role of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and gave the Group an even stronger mandate, requesting that the scope of its work be expanded to cover the activities outlined above. The Commission also requested that the Inter-agency and Expert Group focus on serving as the coordination mechanism for the global gender statistics programme.

24. In order to fulfil the requests, the group met from 4 to 6 October 2011 to review the work carried out, define the programme of work to further the development of gender statistics and ensure that the priority actions identified by the Statistical Commission are being adequately implemented.

25. The agreed programme of work of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics for 2012 includes the following:

- Work on the minimum set of indicators for gender statistics, which comprises initiating the international data compilation of indicators in tier 1; promoting capacity-building activities to expand the data coverage of indicators in tier 2; and undertaking methodological development on indicators in tier 3.
- Development of manuals and guidelines, including completing the gender statistics manual and submitting the draft at the 6th meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group, to be held in April 2012; incorporating comments and input provided by experts at a consultative meeting held in November 2011 on the guidelines for producing statistics on violence against women and finalizing the guidelines by the end of 2012.
- Review of gender statistics programmes, including finalizing the common questionnaire; undertaking the regional collection of information; and compiling regional results into a global synthesis of regional reviews. The Statistics Division will also propose examples of best practices for gender statistics programmes to be agreed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group and used by countries as a reference.
- Capacity development activities, including providing technical assistance, advisory services and training to countries on ways to integrate a gender perspective into their national statistical systems.

26. At its October 2011 meeting, the Inter-agency and Expert Group agreed to establish a new subgroup investigating emerging issues in gender statistics and a new subgroup on the Busan gender data harmonization initiative. The following are the subgroups and advisory groups currently operating under the Inter-agency and Expert Group:

(a) Advisory Group on Survey on Gender Statistics Work, which incorporates the former advisory group on legislation; members include Canada (Chair), Ghana, India, Italy, the Philippines, the regional commissions, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Statistics Division;

(b) Advisory Group on Global Gender Statistics and Indicators Databases; members include Brazil, Canada, Ghana, Jordan, Malawi, Mexico, South Africa, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, the regional commissions, the World Bank, the United

Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Population Division, UN-Women, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), OECD and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (Chair);

(c) Advisory Group on Gender Statistics Training Activities and Curricula; members include Ghana, India, Jordan, Mexico, Nigeria, the Philippines (Chair), the United States, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN-Women, the World Bank and UNICEF;

(d) Subgroup on emerging issues, including the initiative to improve statistics on entrepreneurship; members include the Czech Republic, Egypt, India, Jordan, Mexico (Chair), the World Bank, OECD and the Statistics Division;

(e) Subgroup on the Busan gender data harmonization initiative; members include the United States, OECD, UN-Women, the World Bank and the Statistics Division.

27. The 6th meeting of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics will be held in Amman in March/April 2012.

B. Global Forum on Gender Statistics

28. The Commission requested that the Global Forum on Gender Statistics be held biannually. The next Forum will be jointly organized by the Statistics Division and the National Statistical Office of Jordan and will be held in Amman in March/April 2012.

VII. Conclusions and the way forward

29. **The Statistical Commission might wish to take note of the work carried out by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics and the Statistics Division during 2011 in implementing the requests of the Statistical Commission at its forty-second session on the improvement of gender statistics.**

30. **The Statistical Commission might also wish to take note of the proposed next steps as outlined in paragraph 25 above and covering the following areas:**

- **Work on the minimum set of gender indicators**
- **Development of manuals and guidelines**
- **Review of gender statistics programmes**
- **Capacity development activities**

Annex

Minimum set of gender indicators, by domain*

Table 1
List of gender indicators, by domain

Indicator number	*Indicator*	*Reference to Millennium Development Goals and targets**	*Reference to strategic objectives in Beijing Platform for Action**
I.	**Economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources**		
1	Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic work, by sex Note: separate housework and child care if possible		C.2, F.1, H.3
2	Average number of hours spent on paid and unpaid work combined (total work burden), by sex		F.1, H.3
3	Labour force participation rates for persons aged 15-24 and 15+, by sex		F.1, H.3
4	Proportion of employed who are own-account workers, by sex	Goal 1, target B	F.2
5	Proportion of employed who are working as contributing family workers, by sex	Goal 1, target B	H.3
6	Proportion of employed who are employers, by sex		F.1
7	Percentage of firms owned by women		F.1, F.2
8	Percentage distribution of employed population by sector, each sex		F.5, H.3
9	Informal employment as a percentage of total non-agricultural employment, by sex		F.2, H.3
10	Youth unemployment, by sex		F.1
11	Proportion of population with access to credit, by sex		F.1, F.2
12	Proportion of adult population owning land, by sex		A.1, A.2
13	Gender gap in wages		F.1, F.5
14	Proportion of employed working part-time, by sex		F.5
15	Employment rate of persons aged 25-49 with a child under 3 living in a household and with no children living in the household, by sex		F.6
16	Proportion of children under age 3 in formal care		F.6
17	Proportion of population using the Internet, by sex	Goal 8, target F	F.3
18	Proportion of population using mobile/cellular telephones, by sex	Goal 8, target F	F.3
19	Access to mass media and information and communications technology		F.3

* List as agreed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics at its 4th meeting, held from 4 to 6 October 2012.

Indicator number	Indicator	*Reference to Millennium Development Goals and targets*[a]	*Reference to strategic objectives in Beijing Platform for Action*[b]
II. Education			
30	Literacy rate of persons aged 15-24 years old, by sex	Goal 2	B.2, L.4,
31	Adjusted net enrolment ratio in primary education, by sex	Goal 2	B.1, L.4
32	Gross enrolment ratio in secondary education, by sex	Goal 3	B.1
33	Gross enrolment ratio in tertiary education, by sex		B.1
34	Gender parity index in enrolment at primary, secondary and tertiary levels	Goal 3	B.1, L.4
35	Share of female science, engineering, manufacturing and construction graduates at tertiary level		B.3, B.4, L.4
36	Proportion of females among third-level teachers or professors		B.4, L.4
37	Net intake in first grade of primary education, by sex		B.1
38	Primary education completion rate, by sex		B.1
39	Graduates from lower secondary education, by sex		B.1
40	Transition rate to secondary education, by sex		B.1
41	Education attainment of population aged 25 and over, by sex		B.1
III. Health and related services			
42	Contraceptive prevalence among women who are married or in a union, aged 15-49	Goal 5, target B	C.1, C.2
43	Under-5 mortality rate, by sex	Goal 4	C.1
44	Maternal mortality ratio	Goal 5, target A	C.1
45	Antenatal care coverage	Goal 5, target B	C.1
46	Proportion of births attended by skilled health professional	Goal 5, target A	C.1
47	Smoking prevalence among persons aged 15 and over, by sex		C.2
48	Proportion of adults who are obese, by sex		C.1, C.2
49	Women's share of population aged 15-49 living with HIV/AIDS	Goal 6, target A	C.3
50	Access to antiretroviral drug, by sex	Goal 6, target B and Goal 8, target E	C.3
51	Life expectancy at age 60, by sex		C.1, C.2
52	Adult mortality by cause and age groups		C.1, C.2
IV. Public life and decision-making			
53	Women's share of government ministerial positions		G.1
54	Proportion of seats held by women in national parliament	Goal 3	G.1
55	Women's share of managerial positions		F.1, F.5, G.1
56	Percentage of female police officers		I.2
57	Percentage of female judges		I.2

Indicator number	*Indicator*	*Reference to Millennium Development Goals and targets*[a]	*Reference to strategic objectives in Beijing Platform for Action*[b]
V.	**Human rights of women and the girl child**		
48	Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in past 12 months by an intimate partner		D.1, D.2
49	Proportion of women aged 15-49 subjected to physical or sexual violence in past 12 months by persons other than an intimate partner		D.1, D.2
50	Prevalence of female genital mutilation/cutting (for relevant countries only)		I.2
51	Percentage of women aged 20-24 years old who were married or in a union before age 18		L.1., L.2
52	Adolescent fertility rate	Goal 5, target B	L.1., L.2

[a] Reference is made to the goals and targets under which there are identical or equivalent indicators.

[b] Available from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html.

Table 2
List of gender indicators related to national norms, by domain

Indicator number	*Indicator*	*Reference to Millennium Development Goals and targets*[a]	*Reference to the strategic objectives in the Beijing Platform for Action*[b]
I.	**Economic structures, participation in productive activities and access to resources**		
1	**Extent of country commitment to gender equality in employment**		F.1, F.5
1a	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 100 on equal remuneration for women and men		F.1
1b	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 111 on discrimination in employment and occupation		F.1, F.5
2	**Extent of country commitment to support reconciliation of work and family life**		F.1, F.5, F.6
2a	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 156 on workers with family responsibilities		F.6
2b	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 175 on part-time work		F.5
2c	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 177 on home work		F.5
2d	Whether or not country has ratified International Labour Organization Convention No. 183 on maternity protection		F.1, F.6
3	**Length of maternity leave**		F.1, F.6
4	**Percentage of wages paid during maternity leave**		F.1, F.6
IV.	**Public life and decision-making**		
5	Presence of a gender quota for parliament (reserved seats and legal candidate quotas)	Goal 1	
6	Presence of a gender quota for parliament (voluntary party quotas)	Goal 1	
7	Existence of law on gender statistics		H.3
V.	**Human rights of women and the girl child**		
8	Whether or not reservation has been made to article 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women		L.1
9	Existence of laws on domestic violence		D.1
10	Whether or not inheritance rights discriminate against women and girls		F.1, L.1
11	Legal minimum age at marriage, by sex		L.1

Note: Additional indicators will be identified to address social norms and attitudes; migration; institutional mechanisms; and critical areas, such as strategic objectives E, on women and armed conflict (already covered in part by indicators for Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)), J, on women and the media, and K, on women and the environment.
Indicators will be disaggregated, when possible, to address inequalities based on geographical area, rural/urban, income level, ethnicity, disabilities.

[a] Reference is made to the goals and targets under which there are identical or equivalent indicators.

[b] Available from http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/index.html.